

**Reading LRA
Meeting Report
Thursday, August 11, 2011**

LRA Members Attending: V. Spencer, S. Marmarou, E. Raphaelli, M. Ballas, P. Coles

Others attending: L. Kelleher, C. Folk from Mary's Shelter, A. Mukerji

Mr. Spencer called the meeting to order at approximately 5:15 pm.

Ms. Kelleher stated that the purpose of the meeting is to consider Mary's Shelter's request to amend the Legally Binding Agreement (LBA) by moving into the existing main facility, which would be less expensive and meet their expansion needs. She stated that Mr. Mukerji, Executive Director of the Redevelopment Authority (RRA) was asked to attend so the LRA could discuss some possible ratable reuses for the parcel from residential to various commercial uses.

Ms. Folk explained that originally Mary's Shelter wanted to relocate into the main facility with Berks Women in Crisis (BWIC). After BWIC withdrew they then applied for a one acre parcel for a new facility. However, after reassessing their current and future needs Mary's Shelter believes locating in the existing facility is the best long term solution both financially and for their clients. She distributed estimates for the rehabilitation of the facility. She stated that the configuration of the facility and the zoned utilities are perfectly suited to the phased rehabilitation proposed. She stated that Mary's Shelter clients could move into the rehabbed facility within a six month period.

Ms. Kelleher explained that if the LRA cannot find a suitable reuse for a qualified public benefit conveyance (PBC), which is a no cost transfer, the Navy must perform an appraisal of the property so the fair market value of the property can be determined. If the property is offered for public sale, a public bid or auction will occur. However, if the LRA decides that the RRA should become the owner; the Navy can negotiate a sale privately with the RRA.

Mr. Mukerji agreed that losing the Kenhorst Boulevard frontage would make the site less desirable to a private developer. However, he stated that Alvernia lost interest in the property due to the BRAC requirement for the parcel to be 100% occupied within 2-3 years. He stated that in this economy that short window can be daunting. He noted that the RRA could revisit several of the reuses considered in the past, as the need for 100% occupancy within a given period of time is eliminated because the RRA will actually purchase the property from the Navy.

Ms. Folk stated that Mary's Shelter is willing to maintain the entire site at no cost to the RRA until a suitable reuse comes to fruition.

In response to a question, Ms. Kelleher stated that Ms. Charest from HUD has been informed about the proposed change for Mary's Shelter and is not objecting to the change.

Mr. Mukerji stated that he will discuss this issue with the RRA Board at their meeting scheduled for Wednesday, August 17th at 5 pm in the RRA Office at City Hall. A follow-up meeting with the LRA was scheduled for Wednesday, August 31st at 5 pm in the Council Office.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 6:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Linda A. Kelleher CMC, City Clerk